

**Frequently Asked Questions** Below you can find a list of frequently asked questions associated with this program. If there is a question you have which is not answered below, please do not hesitate to email MISS at [execboard@misselasm.org](mailto:execboard@misselasm.org).

*Is this program really free??*

Yes! Thanks to the generous support of the Barancik Foundation and a few private donors, MISS will absorb all associated costs.

*Can I participate if I live outside the USA?*

This is a great question with a complicated answer. While MISS has no problem offering the opportunity to folks outside the US there are some things we cannot control such as access to visa's to get into the US and time zone changes. We are happy to write formal letters of invitation for you to use in your visa application, but since the week-long workshop is a required part of the experience, if you can't easily get a visa you won't be able to participate. To learn more about the visa requirements for your country, [please visit this website](#). If the visa process is going to take a long time (100+ days) it is unlikely we will be able to accommodate you. Note: citizens of certain countries may be eligible for a [visa waiver](#) if you are willing to forgo your stipend payment (you can't be paid to attend trainings under the visa waiver program).

*What if I can't make it to all of the meetings?*

We understand that life happens, so if you have to miss one or two meetings, that's okay. However, you should only apply if you are going to be able to attend the vast majority of all the online meetings as this is a really important part of the program and you will lose your ability to participate in the program if you miss too many meetings. This is important to keep in mind when applying especially if time zones will make it difficult for you to attend the meetings.

*What will I learn through this program?*

The program will offer an introduction to marine science as a whole and will also include the following topics: marine ecology, oceanography, ocean-human interactions, marine technology and basics of conducting research. In addition to these topics participants will receive professional development support and training in science communication. The Marine Ecology concentration will focus on several methods of collecting data in the field including fisheries-independent surveys,

quadrat surveys, snorkel surveys, safe animal handling, boating basics and more. The Laboratory Techniques concentration will focus on lab safety, quantitative analyses (particularly relating to stable isotopes and genetics) and methodology development. The Marine Technology concentration will focus on the development of cutting-edge technology surrounding biologgers and marine robotics.

*How will the program be structured?*

This is a hybrid program with the majority of it taking place online. The first Thursday of the month will be a Zoom meeting where one of the mentors offers an introductory lesson on that month's topic. These meetings will be an opportunity for all participants to connect with each other and engage in the content together. The third Thursday of the month will be Zoom meetings for each concentration. This will be an opportunity for you to further engage with course content in the context of your specific concentration. You'll also get a chance to connect with your mentor and a near-peer mentor who will answer any questions you have or dive deeper into topics of interest. Throughout each month you'll have access to scientific papers, recorded lectures, discussion boards and other activities through the virtual classroom so you can work through materials for that topic at your own pace. You should expect to spend 1-2 hours per week engaging in either live or asynchronous content for this program.

*How many participants will be accepted to the program?*

We will accept a total of 30 participants to this program. We will be recruiting 16 participants from the Barancik Foundation's target communities (which include Florida as well as the greater Chicago area). The remaining 14 participants will be recruited from all over. The 30 participants will be divided evenly into each of the 3 concentrations (10 participants per concentration).

*Can I get college credit for this program?*

The short answer is maybe. Some universities may allow you to count this program as an independent study credit and we are willing to work with academic offices to make that happen, but it may not be available in all cases.

*What do you mean by people who "have experienced or are experiencing a disruption in the educational/professional development looking to fill a gap in experience?"*

This can mean a lot of things, but some examples might be someone who is a non-traditional student, someone who isn't currently enrolled in a degree program or is completing a degree part-time due to financial constraints, family obligations etc., someone who has already graduated but is having trouble finding a job or getting their foot in the door due to a lack of experience, someone who is looking to change careers and pursue marine science but isn't sure how or someone who finds it difficult to participate in traditional courses, internships etc for any reason.

*What do you mean by "BIPOC gender minorities?"*

BIPOC refers to anyone who identifies as Black, Indigenous or as a Person of Color and a gender minority refers to anyone who identifies as a gender that is minoritized/marginalized in STEM that includes but not limited to those who identify as cisgender women, transgender, nonbinary, agendered, two-spirit, genderfluid, one or more of these identities, or an identity not listed. An important note: we acknowledge that gender and race are social constructs and we are not here to identity police. Therefore if you self-identify as a BIPOC gender minority (whatever that means to you), we invite you to apply.

*Will you be offering accommodations for those with disabilities?*

Absolutely! We will do everything in our power to provide reasonable accommodations. We will touch base with all participants to make sure we can plan ahead to provide them the accommodations they need to get the most out of the program.

*Why don't you ask for a transcript or resume in the application?*

We believe that people are more than their numbers. GPA isn't important to us nor is it a proxy for a person's ability to be a scientist, transcripts often cost money to obtain, and we want to make the application process as painless as possible. We don't require a resume because we are specifically hoping to provide opportunities to people who haven't had access to opportunities in the past. We don't want anyone to feel discouraged from applying because they "don't have enough experience," in fact those are exactly the types of people we want to support with this program.